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# **ANTHON L. SKANCHY**

**A BRIEF AUTOBIO-  
GRAPHICAL SKETCH  
of the MISSIONARY  
LABORS of a VALIANT  
SOLDIER FOR CHRIST**



**TRANSLATED AND EDITED BY  
JOHN A. WIDTSOE  
1915**



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BISHOP ANTHON L. SKANCHY.

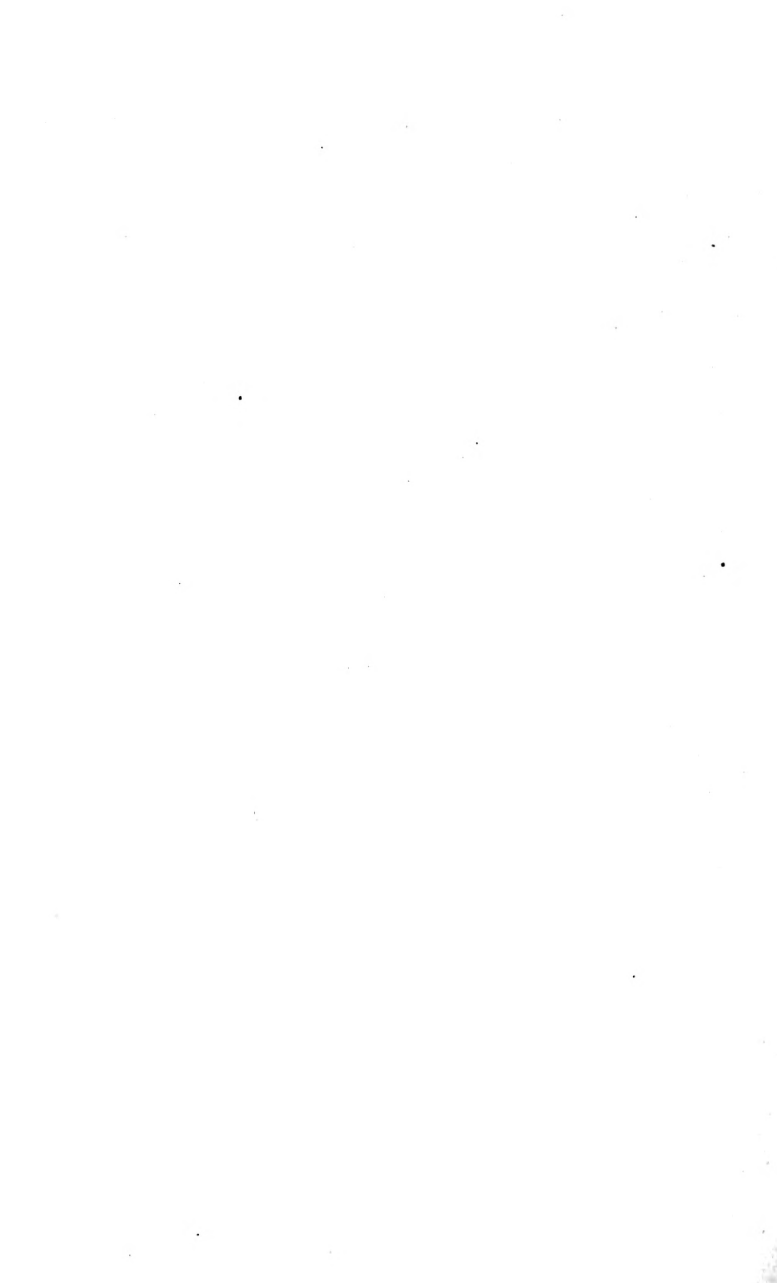
Born, Trondhjem, Norway, Sept. 17, 1839; died, Logan, Utah, April  
19, 1914.

# Anthon L. Skanchy

A Brief Autobiographical Sketch of  
the Missionary Labors of a  
Valiant Soldier for  
Christ



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## INTRODUCTION

The missionary labors of the elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints would form a most interesting chapter in the history of human endeavor. Every experience seems to have fallen to the lot of "Mormon" missionaries, who have labored under every clime and among all classes and races of people. Taken, by a sudden call, from the home, workshop, field, store or office, they have gone out at their own expense, with no special training in speaking or argument, to teach to all the world a system of eternal truth, against which mighty forces have ever been arrayed. The third generation of this volunteer army is now carrying the gospel over the face of the earth, and the vigor of the work is unabated.

The plain, unstudied sketch herewith presented of a few of the missionary experiences of an elder who spent a third of his long, mature life in foreign missionary service can be duplicated by hundreds of the missionaries of the Church. Simple and straightforward these sketches are; yet, between the lines, may be read every human emotion, from the highest exaltation of spirit to the darkest despair. It would be well if many such missionary lives could be published for the encouragement of all who desire to battle fearlessly for righteousness.

Bishop Anthon L. Skanchy died on April 19, 1914, after a lingering illness of several years. In the midst of the pain of this sickness he wrote these sketches, chiefly of his early mission when he had the privilege of opening the gospel door in the beautifully majestic land of the midnight sun, and of bringing hundreds into the Church. He wrote in his mother tongue, which he loved so well. The eloquent directness, as well as the severe repression of feeling, characteristic of the northern people, are on every page.

A few weeks before his death, Bishop Skanchy entrusted his manuscript to me, to do with it as I might see fit. He hoped that, somehow, his experiences might strengthen the testimonies of

others. The missionary instinct was strong within him. I have rendered it freely into English, and, while in so doing it has lost its peculiarly eloquent flavor, I hope it has not wholly lost its power for good. I should greatly love to fulfil the wish of the noble author of these sketches, who was the instrument in the hands of God of bringing to the family to which I belong, and to me, the priceless gift of an understanding of the gospel.

That thousands of such strong men as was Anthon L. Skanchy could and do find a life's satisfaction in the gospel, in spite of the hardships and contempt they must endure, is a strong testimony of the inherent vitality of the message of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

LOGAN, UTAH

# Anthon L. Skanchy

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## A Brief Autobiographical Sketch of the Missionary Labors of a Valiant Soldier for Christ

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TRANSLATED AND EDITED BY JOHN A. WIDTSOE.

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It any of my friends should interest themselves in reading parts of my life's history, of my missions especially in the northern parts of Norway, they may do so in this short report, and they may depend upon it that what is here written is the truth.

### I. EARLY YEARS.

I, Anthon L. Skanchy, was born in Trondhjem, Norway, September 17, 1839, the seventh child of Elling Lornsen Skanchy and Mina Ansjon. My father was a sea-faring man, well known, and much sought after as a pilot in northern Norway. He, as many other sea-faring men of that day, became addicted to strong drink, and consequently, though he earned well, there was poverty in the home. My dear mother was compelled to work both day and night to keep the children, who numbered seven in all.

From the time I was eight years old, I had to work and earn something for the family. My boyhood was spent by the water, where the great fjord comes in from the ocean. The shore was low and level, and great sand-spits ran out into the water. There the water ebbed and flowed every six and one half hours, through a distance of eight or ten feet. When the water was low, we could go out to the sand-spits into the fjord, and there I used to fish with one hundred hooks on my line, baited with sand worms. The line was left on the sand, with the end secured, and after fifteen hours, the water again was low and the lines lay in the dry sand with the fish that had been caught by the hooks. The fish thus caught furnished some means to the support of the family. As I grew a little older I was employed by a fisherman, who owned his own boat, and with him learned how to fish. I also worked between times in the rope factory, where I later became apprenticed and learned the trade well.

The school naturally was neglected, and I was there only once in a while. When I was thirteen years old I began, however, to see the necessity of taking proper hold of my schooling, and determined to use my whole time in the attempt to win back what I had lost. My mother could not earn all the necessities of life for me and herself, and during this period I learned to know the gnawings of hunger and the effects of hunger upon my system. A young school boy as I was could not grow and develop without proper and sufficient food. Those days I can never forget. My mother had a little house of three rooms, built on rented ground. In a little garden around the house she raised potatoes with which to pay the larger part of the rent on the land. Because of broken health and the weakness of my aged father, he had been compelled to quit the sea-faring life, and had journeyed to his oldest son who lived far up in Nordland. There my father resided until his death.

I gave all my time to schooling during three years. I was determined to win back what I had lost, and my interest was centered on the school, and as a result I made good progress. Among other things I was taught the Lutheran religion, and we had regular lessons in the history of the Bible, and explanations of the events and doctrines found in both the Old and the New Testaments. These books on Bible history we were obliged to learn by heart, and I learned my lessons well. This became a good foundation for me in the practice and preaching of my dear religion of the future and, through this knowledge of the Bible, I learned to understand a little of the Lord's dealings with the children of men, which became a great blessing and relief to me in the mission field and at home.

After three years of school work I was confirmed, with a very good grade, in the Lutheran church. I had worked now and then in the rope walks and had become greatly interested in this work. I then apprenticed myself to a rope factory, the owner of which was T. H. Berg. I was permitted to remain at home with my mother, and received about \$1.12 a week for my support in return for my service. This was pretty good, and occasionally I earned something extra between times. As I remained at home it was possible for me to have a little more liberty than I would have had, had I remained with the other apprentices in the household of the master.

Since I had now left the school, in which I had been so intensely interested, I became possessed of a kind of melancholy which led me to seek the Lord and to study religion more closely. I went for help to the Lutheran priest who had confirmed me, and he loaned me several books on religion and other books containing much useful information, in which I interested myself for some time. Nevertheless, I found no satisfaction as a result of my reading; in fact, I hardly knew what I was reading.

One Sunday, in the summer of 1860, I went to the church located a short distance beyond the city. A little valley lies by the side of the main road. I went into this valley, under some trees, and bent upon my knees and prayed to the Lord with a loud voice. Immediately came a moment of great exaltation, but followed quickly by a voice which spoke to me in a contemptuous tone:

"What is wrong with you? What do you want? You come here and bend upon your knees as a child; you, who have learned your profession so well; you, who have so many friends, and have so much honor and respect! Are you not ashamed?"

Under the influence of this voice I began to feel almost ashamed of myself, and of what I was doing. Presently, however, I broke through the mist, and was given power to rebuke the evil spirits and to compel them to draw back. Then a great joy rested upon my soul. I prayed for light. From that time on, I felt as free as a bird in the air.

In the fall of 1860, I finished my apprenticeship. In accordance with the contract, I received my last year's pay, \$14; a suit of new black clothes; new shoes; a silk velvet hat of the best kind, and, in the evening, a splendid dinner. It was customary at the end of the apprenticeship to do a piece of work as a proof that the business had been thoroughly learned. I was required to make a long rope, used by ships in measuring the number of knots traveled per hour. I made such a rope, and it was accepted as very good by the shipping committee. After my apprenticeship was over I was offered work in the same factory, but with the difference that I was to receive the pay of a master workman. In those days there was great traffic in rope, because wire cables had not yet been introduced, and there was much building and travel of ships in the city of Trondhjem.

## II. I ACCEPT THE GOSPEL.

My uncle Cornelius and his wife, who owned a house in the city, a short time before had been baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, by the brothers Dorius, who were the first missionaries in the northern part of Norway. I visited this aunt and presented her with a clothes line which I had made. My aunt was a well spoken lady, very fervent in her faith, and she immediately began to bombard me with "Mormonism." In fact, she lent me a lot of tracts and Scandinavian *Stars* for me to read. These I began to read, and compared what I read with the Bible.

I had my own room in our home and spent all my spare time in the study of the Bible and the "Mormon" books. I soon bor-

rowed more gospel literature and studied it, with the Bible, both day and night, and prayed to God for aid and guidance in the investigation. The testimony that I had the truth came to me more strongly, until, as it were, I became transformed both in body and spirit through the saving message of the gospel.

In those days, many kinds of spirits made themselves known, but this had no influence upon me, for I had seen even the evil one in the days that I attended school. This may sound peculiar, but I have, in truth, seen with my material eyes, evil spirits in different appearances, and under such varying conditions that I am absolutely convinced of their existence among us. Both good and evil spirits are among us even here in the valleys of the mountains. I am ever grateful to the Lord that he has permitted me to see and hear such things, as they have been of great use to me in my life's journey. When I investigated the gospel I established an unspeakable faith in the apostle's counsel that the Saints should seek after spiritual gifts. I have the same faith and conviction today.

I reflected much upon the message that had come to me, without saying much to any one. There was a missionary in Trondhjem, Thomasen, by name, from Christiania, a well informed and talented man; also another named John Dahle, from Bergen. These missionaries conducted meetings among the Saints, but I did not visit their meetings, for I was very retiring in my disposition. Meanwhile my oldest sister, Mrs. Martha Hagen, had investigated the gospel and was baptized. Shortly afterward I also became so strongly convinced of the truth of "Mormonism" that I went to Elder Thomasen and asked to be baptized. In the evening of the 16th of January, 1861, I was baptized at Trondhjem, under a most pleasant influence.

After my baptism, I presented myself at one of the meetings of the Saints. It was the first time that I had attended. Some of the faithful old sisters doubted my sincerity, since I had not before attended their meetings; moreover, it was looked upon as a wonder that a young man, like myself, could face the persecution sure to follow the acceptance of a religion so despised as was "Mormonism." At that time there were few young men in the Church. It was soon proposed that I be ordained an elder. I felt, however, that I was not possessed of the power and information to receive so high a calling, and I asked that the ordination be postponed for some time. In a later meeting it was suggested again that I should be ordained to the priesthood, and I was then ordained an elder in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Immediately afterwards I was called to assist the missionaries.

Trondhjem, at that time, was notoriously the headquarters of "Mormon" persecution. The authorities had gone to the

extreme. They had arrested and severely punished some of our sisters because they had left the legal church of the land and had accepted "Mormonism," and had been baptized into this new Church. Among the sisters so punished were Marit Greslie and Mrs. Olsen, two sisters who later came to Logan and were married to respectable men; also Lena Christensen who later came to Salt Lake City. These sisters were imprisoned and sentenced to five days' imprisonment with a diet of only bread and water. I was also called to the court house at the trial and had to answer many questions put to me by the chief of police. Several of the questions were of such a nature that I did not feel under any obligation to answer them, which did not bring the chief into the best of humor. As a result, the police chief promised me that he should not forget me. He was very bitter in his feelings towards the Saints.

"Mormonism" from that time on, became my guiding star. With great interest I accepted the call to help in bearing testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel, and in visiting the Saints in the city and its surroundings. All this time I continued my work in the rope factory, owned by Mr. Berg, under whom I served my apprenticeship. He was a religious man, a dissenter who had some time before left the Lutheran church and now belonged to a local sect. While my master and I walked up and down the rope walk together spinning hemp, "Mormonism" became the theme of the day, during weeks and months. By this time I had acquired many of the principles of the gospel as taught in the tracts of Orson Pratt and Parley P. Pratt, and I was enabled thereby to continue day after day our interesting discussion.

After I had joined the Church, since it was very difficult to rent a house where meetings could be held, the missionaries secured the largest room in my mother's house. The missionaries lived there, and conducted their meetings there for several years. Many times the house was bombarded by mobs, and my mother had to go and talk to the people in order to disperse them. After a year or so, the persecution quieted somewhat and life became more peaceful. The missionaries had, as it were, a home with my mother, and many enjoyable meetings were held in my mother's house.

After a time my mother also made herself acquainted with the gospel, and developed a faith in it, but was not baptized. On many occasions, during the persecutions, she went out in her garden and preached "Mormonism" to the restless crowd of people standing in the street and around the house. She was well acquainted with the Bible, and at once, when an editor was present in the crowd, he wrote down the principles that she declared to the crowd, and printed them in his paper as the remarkable speech of an old woman. She had a good singing voice and went often

to the houses of our neighbors where she sang songs from our hymn book. The missionaries remained in my mother's house, and loved her, during many years, even after I returned from my first mission to Nordland and Finnmarken in the northern part of Norway.

Several were baptized at Trondhjem. Several changes occurred among the missionaries, and at one time we were in charge of a local elder, who gave us good counsel and guidance. Later we received as our missionary, Hans A. Hansen from Christiansand, who was sent to Trondhjem to care for the new branch there. This man later became my counselor in the bishopric of the sixth ward of Logan.

I secured frequently at this time leave of absence from the factory for a week or two at a time, in order to accompany the missionaries on their visits to the surrounding districts, such as Stordalen, Indhered, Seldo, Borseskogen. In this manner I learned to know something of the different conditions that a "Mormon" elder has to meet. Often, though he had money, we could not secure the privilege of buying food, or a place in which to sleep, simply because we were "Mormons." Nevertheless, we were of good faith, though we were many times utterly exhausted by the long distances that we had to cover on foot, without proper food. These experiences were of a kind to give us greater preparation for our important work as messengers carrying the glad tidings of the gospel to the people. We felt much interested in our labors, especially since we had the joy of seeing some of the fruits of them. Thus passed the first two years of my membership in the Church.

### III. I GO ON MY FIRST MISSION.

Early in the spring of 1863 I was called to be present at the conference to be held in Christiania. I resigned, immediately, my place in the rope factory. According to law, six weeks' notice had to be given when a person resigned from steady employment; but if I was to reach the conference on time, I had to leave at once, for at that time there was no railroad between Christiania and Trondhjem. I was, therefore, obliged to tell the owner of the factory that I had to leave in one week. This was a hard nut for him to crack, especially since he had the law on his side. I told him that I was going to the conference, law or no law, and that I was going to be there on time. He finally gave in to my request, and even offered to meet me in the morning of my departure to bid me goodby, and promised to send an apprentice to carry my satchel to the city limits.

On the morning of my departure, the master came, accord-



ing to his agreement, and brought with him an old school teacher, connected with the church, as I supposed for the purpose of driving "Mormonism" out of me. Their plan did not materialize; our discussions were carried on in a friendly way, and at last they bade me goodby, and gave me their best wishes for my future. The apprentice came and carried my satchel through the city. Thus I left my native city, to begin the many years of missionary service.

A Swedish rope-maker was also on his way to Christiania, and we, therefore, traveled together. We traveled on foot, along the country roads, the 350 miles that separate Trondhjem from Christiania. This was early in the month of March. The roads were difficult to travel for there was much snow. Moreover, neither of us knew the conditions and short cuts of the roads. We had snow shoes along with us, which made our journey more rapid in places where they could be used. On we traveled, day after day; along the valleys, over the hills, now in heavy drifted snow, now where the road was bare from the heavy winds.

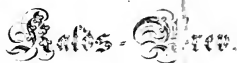
In the course of our journey, we finally had to climb Dovre mountain, the highest divide in Norway. The mountain side was covered with drifted snow, and it was exceedingly difficult to walk there. One evening we reached the station known as Grievestuen, the first station north of Dovre mountain, and spent the night there on nearly the highest point of the mountain. This is far above the tree line, and no dwelling houses are found so far up on the mountain. The next day we crossed the mountain, for the first time for me, though it was not to be my last. That day we undertook, as usual, almost too much of a day's journey, for we traveled almost fourteen miles through the heavy drifted snow, to the second station from the one in which we had spent the night. Darkness overtook us. The road was filled with drifted snow, and in our worn-out condition we were in danger of giving up and remaining in the snow throughout the night. I had in my pocket a small bottle of camphor drops of which we took a drop now and then. This seemed to help us, and at length, we reached the station.

The next morning we walked ten or twelve miles downward into the beautiful and well-known Guldbrands Valley. Some days later we reached the beautiful city of Lillehammer, which lies at the end of the great lake of Mjosen. Ships here take passengers to Eidsvold; but, when we arrived, the lake was still covered with ice and we had to continue our foot journey twenty-eight miles farther. At last we reached the town of Gjevig, where we journeyed by ship to Eidsvold, the railroad terminus, where we boarded the train immediately, and found ourselves in Christiania the same day. The long walk was ended.

On the evening of my arrival, the conference began, in the

large hall in Storgaden. Elder Rasmus Johansen was president, and the brothers Dorius were also there. I felt like one who has just escaped from a prison—glad and happy. We had a good time together. Nearly all of the missionaries and our local elders were there. During this conference I was called to go to Nordland on a mission, and I received my commission from President Rasmus Johansen. I suppose few of those present knew anything about Nordland at that time.

Soon after the conference, I began, alone, my long tramp of 350 miles, northward, to my native city of Trondhjem. On the return journey, however, I took a somewhat different route, through Osterdalen. On this trip, also, I had to walk across a great mountain and as I was not acquainted with the conditions, it was night before I came down from the mountain, into the nearest village. The people had all gone to bed. I knocked on the door of one of the houses. "Who is there?" asked someone. "A stranger who has come over the mountain," said I. "No, he can get no entertainment here," said a woman, briskly. "Hold on," said a man. "A man who has walked over the mountain



Herved beviæres, at *Ant. L. Skanchy* er ordineret til  
*Præsident* i **Jesu Christi Kirke i Sidste-Dages Hellige**  
 ved Haandspaaleggelse, og overensstemmende med Kirkens Regler, og fuldkommen  
 berettiget til at prædike Evangelium og forrette alle hans Embede tilhørende Pligter.  
 Efter den Kundskab vi have om hans Betænkthed og gode Charakter, og hans  
 Attraa til at lære Menneskene Sandheden, og overlede dem til at skyde det Onde og  
 holde sig til det Gode, anbefale vi ham til alle gode Mennesker og nedbede vor him-  
 melske Faders Velsignelser over alle hans Bestræbelser og over Alle, som give Agt  
 paa hans Ord.

Givet under vore Hænder med almindeligt Råd af bemeldte Kirkens Embeds-  
 mænd i *Trondhjem* den *2de* Maaned 1863

*J. P. Johansen*  
 Præsident.

*Ant. L. Skanchy*  
 Sekretær.

#### MISSIONARY CERTIFICATE OF BISHOP ANTHON L. SKANCHY.

This certificate, issued in 1863, bears the endorsement of different police officers, under date of Nov. 2, 1863; June 10, 1864; and May 24, 1865.

alone at this time of night needs rest. I have been out myself and know what it means." He dressed himself, opened the door, put good food on the table, made my bed, and said, "Help yourself." This man was one of the many who has secured, for himself, a reward.

I came finally to the city of Roros, where many of my family lived, and to whom I bore my testimony. At last I reached Trondhjem where I secured work again in the rope factory, and where I worked during two weeks, in order to earn enough to buy a steamer ticket to the place assigned to me for my missionary labors. At that time, the missionaries were sent out without purse or scrip, and depended entirely upon the promises of the Lord.

#### IV. MISSIONARY LABORS IN NORDLAND AND FIN-MARKEN.

The 27th of May, 1863, I took passage with the steamship *Prince Gustaf*, and with God's mercy of eternal salvation before me, I bade my dear mother goodbye. With joy in my heart I went out to carry the message of the everlasting covenant, to preach the gospel and to battle for the cause of truth.

The first island I visited was Degoe. It lies off Helgeland. There I bore my testimony to the people, and distributed books and tracts wherever I went. I then traveled to Harstad, from there to Qvarfjorden where there was a family who belonged to the Church, and then along Kadsfjorden where there also was a family belonging to the Church.

Then came numerous long visits among the many deep fjords and sounds of which Nordland mainly consists, and upon the islands, most of which are thickly peopled. I traveled by boat, sailship or steamship, as opportunity offered. I tramped from island to island, over mountains and valleys, visited houses and fishing districts, and had opportunity to bear my testimony before many people. I visited nearly all of the inhabited islands, fjords and sounds in Nordland. There I met many kinds of people,—priests and school teachers, and many people well versed in the Bible. The people in Nordland seemed to me to be better posted on the Bible than in any other place in Norway. The few Saints whom I found scattered on the different islands were visited, but, soon after I reached there, two families who belonged to the Church emigrated to Zion, namely Pollov Israelsen, and Peter Hartvigsen. My greatest interest and joy was my mission work; this I can truthfully say.

Nordland begins several miles north of Trondhjem, where the Atlantic ocean crowds in and follows the Norwegian coastline northward and washes the old steep rocks of the shore, until the famous North Cape is reached, a few miles from the widely

known city of Hammerfest. Hundreds of tourists from various nations visit this place every summer. Here they may see the midnight sun circle around the horizon, through two long months of summer. After we leave North Cape the coast line draws north-east and east to south, until the great Atlantic ocean surrounds Norway's northern, barren and fjord-furrowed coast. This part of Norway is called Finmarken. The country is here very barren. No vegetation, excepting grass, is found, and the population, chiefly Finns and Lapps, live on the mountains and care for their great herds of reindeer, or, they live on the islands and fish from season to season. Fishing, as is well known, is the life-blood of Norway's industrial existence. I give these facts because this great mission field is little known, even now, in our Church history.

I was called to go on a mission to Nordland, which includes many cities such as Namsos, Bodo, Harstad, and Tromso. The last mentioned city lies 875 miles north of Trondhjem, and Vardo, the most distant of the cities lies 1,400 miles north of Trondhjem. This vast territory was, therefore, my mission field. In this field only ten souls belonged to the Church at the time I came there. These few had been baptized by Elder Ola Orstend who was the captain of a trading ship, and who later became postmaster in Cottonwood, Utah.

The people in that part of the land did not always deem it proper for me to preach "Mormonism" and to administer the ordinances of the Church. Consequently, during the time I spent in that country, I was arrested seven times, carried over land and sea in boats and steamers as a prisoner, tried in various places, and was sentenced to imprisonment six times. The first time I was given six days imprisonment with only bread and water for food. This was in the city of Tromso. In the prison I had to mingle with thieves and murderers. I was assigned a little room in the attic with a tiny window in the east, and a hard bed hanging by hinges on the wall so that it might be dropped down when it was to be used and lifted again when not in use, so that there would be some room for me in which to move about. A tiny table and a tiny bench constituted the furniture. I had a small piece of sour, coarse bread, and all the water I desired, every twenty-four hours. The cause of my sentence was illegal religious activity.

When I had earned my freedom, and was let out of the prison, I began again to bear my testimony among the people and to distribute books and to hold meetings, and to baptize those who were converted to the saving message.

The tracts that I distributed found their way to many of the honest in heart. I heard at one time of a man far away in Finmarken who desired much to see and speak with an elder. He had read something in some of our books that had reached him. I

had then just come out of the prison in Tromsø. I bought a ticket on a steamer to a station known as Hasvig, on the east side of the great island of Sørø. He who desired to meet an elder of the Church lived in Ofjorden, west of the island, nearly thirty-five miles away, over great mountains and morasses. Since I had never been in this place, I wondered if I could find my way to it. The only road was that made by the goats as they traveled back and forth between the watering and feeding places. The steamship was to arrive in Hasvig at two o'clock in the morning. It was the 16th day of September. I was the only deck passenger on the ship. As the night went on I became very anxious about the manner of my reaching my destination, and when all was quiet on board I went forward on the ship, bowed before the Lord and prayed to him, in whose service I was traveling, to guide my footsteps and to care for me on this particular task. I became surrounded by a great light and a voice said to me, "Be of good courage. You are not alone. Whatever is necessary will be given you." I cannot describe how happy I felt.

At two o'clock in the morning the steamboat whistled and we stopped at the station of Hasvig. There was no landing place there at that time, so the postmaster came out with a boat to deliver and receive the mail. I was the only passenger he brought away. He asked me where I came from and where I was going. I told him and he invited me immediately to go with him to his office. He said, "My housekeeper has always a cup of coffee ready for me when I am up at night to get the mail." Afterwards he went down with me to the shore and took me to a freight boat which was about to travel up the fjord the way I was going. The postmaster asked those in the boat to take me with them as far as they went, and told me it was best for me to begin my foot journey at the place the boat would stop. I continued with the boat to Sorvar, which we reached at ten o'clock the next forenoon. Great fishing districts are located there. I had been up all night, and I was very tired. A fisherman whom I met asked me to go with him to his place and he would make some coffee for me, for he understood that I was tired.

As my strength returned to me I began to bear my testimony to them. After an hour's time, one of the many who had gathered to listen to me, invited me to go with him to his house for dinner, after which he took a boat and rowed me across the sound. On this journey our time was occupied in explaining questions which he directed to me. He was very much interested. After we crossed the sound he hired a boat and we rowed up to the head of the fjord. Here we found shelter for the night with a family of Laps. When they heard where I was going, one of the Lap women said she knew the road well and offered to go with me and to show me the road over the mountains, about seven miles.

We reached Ofjorden, my destination, early in the afternoon and was welcomed by the man who had desired to see a "Mormon" elder. This man, for some time, had held a position similar to that of probate judge, but had resigned his position and was now living quietly and was being cared for by a housekeeper. It was peculiar that the man who had heard me speak on the island, and who had rowed me across the sound, had followed me the whole distance. I held a meeting with them and spoke to them the whole day of my arrival and the day after. My friend the fisherman returned, at last. The day afterward I baptized the old probate judge; later his housekeeper was baptized, and at last the Lap woman who had acted as my guide over the mountain was baptized. When this had been accomplished the Lap woman guided me back straight over the mountain, to Hasvig where I had left the steamship early in the night just a week previously. The vision that I had had on the deck of the ship that night had been literally fulfilled. Everything that was necessary had been given me. I felt very grateful to the Lord for his fatherly care and guidance during the week.

Afterward I visited the huts of the Laps on the shore and slept one night with them. They received me with much kindness, invited me to eat with them and desired much to listen to what I had to tell them. I held a meeting with them and sang for them. They all felt well, as did I also.

## V. AGAIN BEFORE THE COURTS.

I had a sister five years older than myself who was not in the Church, but was a private teacher in the family of Mr. Miller, a merchant in Kovaaen, about one hundred seventy-five miles south of Tromso. Mrs. Miller was slightly related to the Skanchys. At one time I had been kept in prison in Tromso during twenty-one days, waiting for a session of the court at which I could be tried. At last I was sent by steamship to Kovaaen, where a court was to be held.

We left Tromso about ten o'clock in the evening. There were many passengers on board, especially on the deck. It was one of the mild, beautiful summer nights of Nordland. The steward who had my ticket and was supposed to take care of me desired to have a little fun with the "Mormon" preacher, but apparently he made a wrong calculation, for when he attacked me with improper words, I talked back to him so loudly that the captain on the bridge came running down to the steward and took him by the coat collar and put him under arrest, saying that he had no right to make life disagreeable for a prisoner. The steward remained under deck as a prisoner during the whole day.

At once, as a result of this episode, I was surrounded by all the passengers on the deck, and as I stood on one side of the deck the little ship began to tip. The captain very politely asked me to stand in the middle of the deck. I felt then that I had a good opportunity to preach and to answer the questions that might be put to me. The people again gathered about me, and I stood there and defended the cause of truth from twelve o'clock at night until five o'clock in the morning. At that time a lady of the first class came to me and offered me something to eat. This food strengthened my body. Thus, in my life's experience, I have been occupied a whole night in battling for the cause of truth. On this occasion I felt that I was not alone, but that I was powerfully supported by the Lord and his influence.

At seven o'clock in the morning we reached our destination, and two of the civil authorities came on board. They both greeted me, as I had long been acquainted with them. At eight o'clock we reached the place where the court was to be held. The courthouse was on a little hill rising abruptly from the fjord. Mr. Nordrum, the court clerk, and his deputy went at once into the house which was occupied as a dwelling house, and where the family were eating breakfast. Mr. Nordrum was a liberal-minded man and he said to Mrs. Miller, "Have you a comfortable room that we can have, as we have a prisoner along with us?"

"What?" said the lady, "a nice room for a prisoner?"

"Yes," he answered. "It is no ordinary prisoner. It is the 'Mormon' preacher, Skanchy."

My sister, who was standing by the table, heard this and almost fainted. She left the table and went weeping down to the shore where I was standing, threw her arms about my neck, kissed me, and cried again. All this was done to the great surprise of my fellow passenger, the lady who so kindly gave me a bite to eat earlier in the morning. This lady soon heard that I was her brother. This also brought tears from the lady, who said, "I would give a great deal if I had such a brother, for he has been on the battlefield all night and has won a victory."

All this occurred on Sunday morning. I was given a good breakfast in a large, well-furnished room in the building. The court clerk came to my room, greeted me in a friendly way, and told me that my hearing should be the first one so that I could be released early.

At eight o'clock Monday morning, I was called into the court room where I was examined concerning my great crime against the Norwegian law, namely, that I had freely preached the doctrines of the Bible and performed the ordinances of the gospel which should be done only by the Lutheran priests who were paid for so doing. The court clerk, Mr. Nordrum, of whom I have spoken, felt well towards the "Mormons" and treated them with

much respect, but he was obliged, of course, to do his work in accordance with the laws of the land. The only judges who were after us were those who wanted to make a reputation for themselves by persecuting the "Mormons."

This bitter trial was similar to the many others to which I had been subjected. Upon the request of the court, I bore a long testimony to the truthfulness of "Mormonism," all of which was written down in the records of the court. All of it was read to me again, so that I might correct it, if I so desired, before it became a permanent part of the court records. I thought this was not so bad, as my testimony had been written into the official records each time that I had been before the courts. As a result a great deal of "Mormonism" stands recorded in the official records of northern Norway, as a testimony against the unjust persecutions to which the servants of the Lord have been subjected.

My case now went to a superior officer for his consideration, and I was set free until such time as he might pronounce judgment upon me. The day after, the clerk of the court, Mr. Nordrum, offered to take me on my journey with him, in a large row boat which belonged to the city. It would be at least a week before the steamer arrived. The boat had four men as rowers. The clerk and I sat at the back of the boat on a comfortable bench, and during the eight hours of the trip discussed the gospel. We came during the day to a large island which was densely populated and there, in accordance with my wishes, I was set on land. On this island I took up my work with much satisfaction, and continued it from island to island.

I will say here again that my mission work was of greatest interest and joy to me. When I saw the fruits of my work, as I took the honest in heart to the water's edge and there baptized them, I felt that it was the most glorious work any mortal could perform. No sacrifice seemed too great, for I felt as if my whole system was swallowed up in "Mormonism."

The experiences which I won by my work in Nordland, the long journeys by land and water, the sacrifices and the suffering I had to endure, such as hunger and loss of sleep, will always remain in my memory, and they were no doubt for my good. I learned on this mission great lessons, and the Lord be praised therefor.

## VI. HOW I SPENT THE WINTER IN NORDLAND.

I continued my work until late into the fall and early winter, as long as I could find the people at home. When winter opened, most of the able-bodied men voyaged to the fishing districts and worked there throughout the winter. Especially did the fishermen gather in the famous fisheries of Lofoten, where thousands



of men and boats assembled each winter while the women, children and the aged remained home on the islands. At that season so much snow falls that it is almost impossible to travel from place to place.

I was in considerable distress, for I hardly knew what a poor missionary could do during the winter to perform his duties and to measure up to the responsibilities that had been placed upon him and be true to his call. This great problem filled my thoughts. I presented the matter to Him in whose service I had been called. The result was that I obtained the testimony that I should go wherever I could find people and work with them just as far as I could. Consequently, I started out for the fisheries where the men gathered for the winter.

First I went to the island of Hatsel, and from there to a place near Lofoten, in the midst of the wild ocean, and hired out to one of the fishermen, the owner of a large boat. There were six of us in the boat, and during the winter we fished with all our strength in the great Atlantic Ocean. An old house stood on the shore, at a point known as Qualnes, in which the fishermen lived during the fishing season. Twelve men, six from our boat and six from another, lived in the large, one room of the cabin. Here we cooked and slept; but it went pretty well.

As I was quick, strong, and endured the sea without becoming sick, I felt that I never needed to take a place inferior to any of the other men. My associates were raw, uncultured seamen. I thought to myself, "Here is something for me to do." I went out among the great rocks that littered the coast and had my prayers and communions with the Lord. Soon I acquired influence over the men and began to teach them to refrain from their fearful swearing and cursing, which they continued from morning until evening. They all knew that I was a "Mormon" preacher. Our captain was the first to stop swearing; then the others, and finally they developed a very great respect for me. Whatever I said, they accepted as being right. In the end they developed such a love for me that when the fishing season was ended, and I bade them farewell, tears came into their eyes. This was the first winter of my first mission, and the first winter that I spent as a fisherman on the wild ocean.

From the fisheries I sailed to the island of Hatsel where my winter's captain lived, and visited for a short time with him and his family. I received my \$34 for the winter's work, and went joyfully on my way, to continue my mission over the country.

## VII. THE LORD SENDS ME MONEY AND MORE FRIENDS.

The second summer of my mission was used chiefly in preaching to the fishermen. I traveled from island to island, from shore to shore, over mountains and valleys, and I won numerous friends. Many were baptized and more were left with a testimony. I was arrested, of course, and on one occasion was given eight days' solitary confinement with only bread and water to eat. In the fall my means had all been consumed, and the snow water ran in and out of my boots. I succeeded in borrowing about five dollars from a friend, who was not in the Church, and that put me in tip-top shape again. On my journey I secured many subscribers for the *Scandinavian Star*, which also helped to spread the gospel.

The second winter came, and I received a letter from Captain Christian Hansen, with whom I had labored the preceding winter, asking me to report at his home the first of January, 1865. It was about the middle of December that one of the brethren who took a boat and rowed me into Gosfjorden, whence I could walk over a mountain, about fourteen miles, until I would be opposite the island which was my destination. The country here was very wild and open, and had great chasms running through it. It was very easy for a person to become hopelessly lost in a maze of wonderful natural phenomena. I bade my good brother goodbye by the ocean side; he gave me explicit instructions for my guidance. I was to go in a straight line southward, and I would reach my destination. As much snow lay on the ground, I took a pair of skis and carried my clothes and books in a satchel on my back.

Within five minutes after starting, the air became filled with snow, so that I could not discover which was south or north. To go back was impossible, for no one lived by the fjord; the boat had gone back, and I stood alone in the solitary, mountainous wilderness. However, this did not frighten me, for I felt that I was directed by the Lord. I turned about to get the direction I had taken in the beginning, and then sighted ahead, as best I could, in the same direction to some bush or other natural object. This I repeated, over and over again, and in that fashion I traveled the whole fourteen miles in the midst of a terrific snow-storm. The snow was so soft that my skis sank down in it until I was in the snow almost up to my knees, and I could hardly see the end of my skis, as I brought them out of the snow. Naturally, my progress was slow.

Night came and darkness overtook me, but for me there was light, nevertheless. At nine o'clock that night I reached the shore. It was joy to take the skis from my feet and walk on the sand among the great rocks. I saw a house on the shore about a mile away. I went in there and asked for lodging. I was so overcome

by weakness from the hard journey of the day that I could scarcely speak. The man in the house, however, understood what troubled me, and placed me in a chair by the warm stove; then he took my boots from off my feet, and brought me from the cellar a bowl of home-made malt beer. After I had become warmed, he asked me to sit up to the table and eat. I did this in a great hurry.

This poor fisherman's home was the only house on this side of the island. After I had eaten, the wife made the beds. She put clean sheets and pillow slips over a good straw mattress covered with an old boat sail in the corner of the one room in the house. After prayers, it seemed that they knew who I was. I was then made to sleep in their own bed, while they slept on the straw bed made in the corner.

The next morning we had a modest breakfast, and the man rowed me across the sound to the next island, and would not take the slightest pay for what he had done. I then walked across this island and found a man to ferry me across the next sound. For this service the ferryman demanded twenty-five cents. This was the last money that I had. I gave him the money and he set me ashore on a sand ridge that jutted out from the island into the water. He immediately rowed back to his own island. There I stood, alone, penniless and in a strange place. With a heavy heart I gathered up my satchel and my coat and looked around for my directions. There, as I looked, by my side and on the sand, lay a little pile of money in silver and copper coins, totaling nearly a dollar. I was so affected by this unexpected relief that I sat down on a stone and wept for gratitude.

I wondered how this money had been left, and came to the conclusion that some fishermen had probably been selling fish among the neighboring islands and had placed the money that they received, as is very common, in the bailing dipper of the boat; on their way back they had forgotten that the money was in the bailing dipper, and in bailing out the boat had thrown the money accidentally on the sand-ridge on which I had landed. However, it had happened. It was another testimony to me that there is One high above us, who sees and knows all things. He knew, no doubt, that I had paid out my last money, and therefore guided my boat so that I landed where this money had been lost. I was grateful to the Lord.

I continued my journey from island to island, and at last reached the island of Hasel, where I was received warmly by Captain Christian Hansen and his wife. This time he offered me a much better position in the fishery than I had the previous winter. I was to be with him during January, February and March. He was to furnish the fishing apparatus and my provisions, and we were to divide equally the products of my labor. I agreed to this and we sailed away.

We lived this winter also in the old log house, and all went fairly well. When the fishing season was ended, and the account was to be settled, I found that my share was about fifty dollars. I paid my debts and continued my journeys again.

#### VIII. I AM RELEASED FROM MY FIRST MISSION.

At last I came to the town Vardo in Finmarken, the most distant city in my field, where I remained a few weeks. While there I went out on the ocean and fished. Instead of nets, hooks and lines were used. The whole ocean was so filled with fish that it seemed as if it were a great pot in which fish were boiled. It was a common experience that heavily weighted fish lines could not get past the mass of fish.

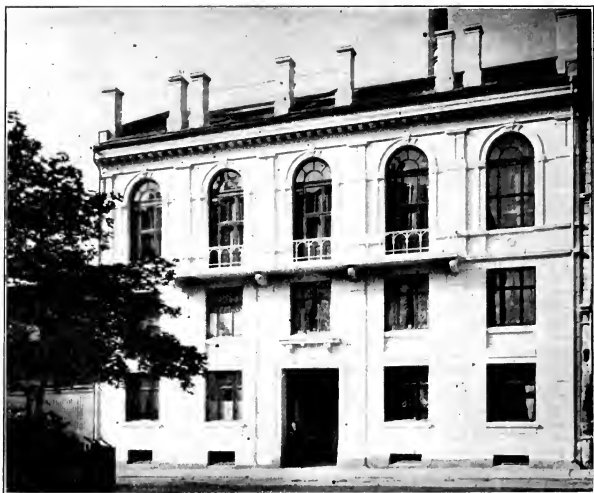
On this trip I was arrested for preaching the gospel of Christ and brought by steamer to the city of Hammerfest, where sentence was pronounced on me; and from there, in another steamer to Tromso where I spent ten days in prison on a diet of bread and water. I learned many things from these seasons of imprisonment. I was a young man, healthy and strong, accustomed to moving quickly in my work, and I found that this diet of bread and water did not agree with me; especially as I was given a tiny piece of sour, heavy, dry, coarse bread, about the size of half of my hand, every twenty-four hours. As the days went by in prison, I must confess that I became very hungry and that it caused sleeplessness. I was able to sleep about two hours each night, and would awake weak and tired. I dreamed usually that I was feasting on an abundance of things to eat and drink and then would suddenly awake hungry and weak, dizziness and headache overmastering me. I lay on my hard bed hoping for the arrival of day because I could then divert my thoughts a little better. These seasons of imprisonment tired me severely. None can fully understand it unless he has experienced it himself. It brought to my mind the words of the Prophet Isaiah, "It shall even be as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold, he eateth; but he waketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and behold, he drinketh, but he waketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul has appetite: So shall the multitude of the nations be that fight against Mount Zion." I thought to myself that he who spoke those words had undoubtedly had experience in it.

During the month of July, in 1865, the third summer of my labors in Nordland, I received my release from this mission, from Elder George M. Brown, who then presided over the Norway conference. I wrote to all the Saints in Nordland's branch to

meet in the historical place Bjarkoe at a stated time. All of the Saints came to the meeting, as also strangers. My sister in the flesh, Amelia, came there, also, and was baptized. We partook of the sacrament together, and for three or four days we had a most enjoyable time. At last, then, I bade farewell to my brethren, sisters and friends, and to Nordland with its many islands, fjords and great and beautiful mountains, forming a landscape so brilliantly equipped that it does not stand second to any that I have seen. The impressions which became stamped upon my mind during my mission up among the people of northern Norway, in the days of my youth, will never, I believe, leave me, for one might learn more up there than can be learned in a university.

Before I leave this extensive and valuable mission field, I will add my modest judgment of this great and beautiful country, with fjords and sounds, islands and high mountains covered with leafy trees, reaching down to the shore, with the background of high cliffs and barren mountains, covered with patches of trees and moss, where the Laps watch their great herds grazing in the small mountain valleys. All about, are every kind of feathered life, representing the birds of the ocean, among which the eider duck is a prominent feature. It seems as if Nature has here made attempt after attempt to invite wealth and beauty to the children of men. Three months throughout the year the midnight sun shines; the great ocean teems with measureless wealth ~~and~~ food for man. Wherever one turns there is something attractive to behold. Not only is the eye pleased, but the spiritual intelligence is touched as well. To me it was as if, in this rugged nature, a new world of inspiration and introspection came from God, who from the beginning had organized the whole land. No wonder that thousands visit summer after summer this land of the midnight sun, this wonderland.

I took passage homeward in a steamer under Capt. J. S. Green, a friend of mine, and a member of the Church. I was very grateful to the Lord for his fatherly care and protection over me during my honest labors both on land and sea; and though I felt myself a very humble and imperfect messenger of the great and noble work, I also felt that the Lord was satisfied with my work, and that the honor belonged to him. At last I reached Trondhjem and had the joy to greet my dear mother again, together with my brethren, sisters and friends. I remained a few days with the missionaries, who still roomed in my mother's house, and held several meetings. Then I bade my mother farewell again, and began my long walk to Christiania, and again had the opportunity of walking over the Dovre mountain alone. I reached Christiania in due season, about two and a half years after I set out on my mission.



LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MISSION HOUSE, CHRISTIANIA, NORWAY.

#### IX. I LABOR IN AALESUND.

I was retained as a missionary, but was now at liberty to go wherever I wanted. I said goodby, and journeyed on to Guldbrands valley where I thought there would be a good field for work, as the whole valley is thickly populated. From there I went to Roms valley and at last reached Aalesund. In this city I found a sister whom I had baptized in Nordland and who was now married to Mr. Myre, a bookkeeper. As I was the first elder who had visited this town, I was greatly persecuted by the minister, Mr. Buck, and by the police who were on my track every day. Nevertheless, I won friends there and after a time baptized Mr. Myre.

Just at this time Elder Christian Folkman, and the Saints who were in Trondhjem, invited me to spend the Christmas season there, and sent me traveling money so that I could buy my steamship ticket. I was in my native city by Christmas and had a most interesting time.

Early in January, I returned by steamer to Aalesund, to continue my work. When I arrived I had only twelve cents, which was just enough to pay the man who rowed me from the steamship



INTERIOR OF THE ASSEMBLY HALL, LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MISSION HOUSE, CHRISTIANIA, NORWAY.

and placed me on land in the city. I secured lodgings in the house of a master shoemaker, Nielsen, who owned a large three-story house. The police chief soon came and ordered me to leave the city, but when I told him I was paying for my support, and that I knew something about the Norwegian law and his authority, and that it did not extend so far as to drive me out of the city, he left me alone, but commanded his force to keep a very close watch over me.

Then came the priest of the city, the Mr. Buck formerly mentioned, in company with one of the local merchants, and gave me considerable more such information, that if I conducted any meetings, the doors of the prison were ready to close behind me. A few days afterward I went to call on the priest, but he saw me come and instructed his housekeeper to tell me that he was not at home. When I asked if the pastor was at home, she said, "No, he is away." As I knew that he was at home at that time, I warned the lady she should not tell an untruth to one of the Lord's servants. She took my words to heart and told her folks what had happened. It so happened that this lady was of very prominent parents, and they immediately took their daughter home. Two days later, one of the merchants greeted me, and told me that this story of the pastor's untruthfulness had spread over the city to the shame of the pastor himself. Sometime after I had left Aalesund, I heard that this minister, Mr. Buck, had hung himself, for what reason I did not learn.

Then came the superior priest of the district and pressed upon my landlord that he must drive me out of the house, and not give home or habitation to false prophets. Mr. Nielsen, who had learned something of the gospel, bore testimony in my behalf, and then everything went wrong. I was not present, but the two must have had a serious time together.

In a few days came a letter from the superior priest to Mr. Nielsen insisting that as Nielsen was a respected man in the community, in order to maintain his good name he must not any longer give me lodging. Mr. Nielsen was now in a tight place, and he presented the matter to me. He did not want to turn me out, yet he desired to favor the chief priest of the district. In fact, so overcome was he that he cried. An evening or two later he received another letter from the pastor which was even more insistent.

The morning after the receipt of the second letter, I placed the whole matter before the Lord, and received my inspiration that if I would call on the priest he would acknowledge the correctness of every principle that I might present to him. Filled with joy, I walked to his home some two miles beyond the edge of the city. I was courteously invited into the office of the great man. We had first a conversation concerning the Bible; then, concerning the relation of "Mormonism" to Biblical doctrines. Questions were directed to me, and I replied in the spirit of truth that was present; and he acknowledged the correctness of every principle that I advocated. For two hours we were together in friendly conversation. The battle was won; and from that time on he was especially kind and helpful to our missionaries who followed me. The same day Mr. Nielsen was informed by letter from the priest that he could give me lodging as long as he liked, and the priest further stated that he had had a conversation with Mr. Skanchy which convinced him that he had been mistaken in his opposition, but excused himself by saying that it was the duty of his profession to oppose those who believed in any other religion than that supported by the state.

Even after this, I had a pretty hard time in Aalesund; but after several members had been brought into the Church the work became somewhat easier. Among others who were baptized at this time was Mrs. Soneva Torgesen, the wife of a friendly ship captain. This woman was a true daughter of Israel, and did much good. She had two small children whom I blessed. The boy was instructed by his mother and is a faithful elder in the Church today.

In the spring of 1867, at a conference held in Christiania, C. C. A. Christensen, who had arrived from Utah, was assigned to preside in Norway. I bade farewell to Aalesund and began my journey up the valley of the Roms, over Dovre mountain



again, and then down Guldbrands valley until I reached the little town of Lillehammer, where we had a sister in the gospel, Ellen Buckwald, who was employed in the household of a Mr. Revers, a friend of our people. To this house the elders were invited whenever they came to the city, and were treated there in the very best manner. I had many conversations concerning the gospel with this educated man. The family did not want to part with Ellen, for she taught the children of the household "Mormonism," and used to pray, even, for Brigham Young as a leader of Israel.

I finally again came to Christiania, and in the conference then held was released from my second mission by the outgoing president.

#### X. I PRESIDE IN CHRISTIANIA.

Elder C. C. A. Christensen then took over the guidance of the Saints in Norway. I was called to act as the president of the Christiania branch which at that time had about 600 members. Upon the receipt of this call I felt my unworthiness in a very great degree. There were many in the congregation who had accepted the gospel long before I had, many of them older and more intelligent men and women, but I prayed to my God for wisdom and intelligence to be able to guide this great body of people. These prayers were heard and the Lord blessed me mightily. I gained the love and respect of the Saints and with the fatherly guidance of our respected President, C. C. A. Christensen, I got along very well. Many persons were converted and baptized into the Church both in Christiania and throughout the branches in the country as a result of the visits of President Christensen to the different branches and the meetings he held everywhere with the people.

As the children of the Saints in Christiania were often persecuted in school by the other children, because their parents were "Mormons," I decided to try to stop this unnecessary and improper persecution. I went to the chief of police, one of our friends, and counseled with him as to what we would best do. He advised us to petition the school board, the chairman of which was Bishop Arup, for the privilege of establishing a school of our own, and he suggested further that we secure a number of well known names to this petition and offered to be the first to sign it. We delivered this petition to the bishop who was a very courteous man. After a couple of weeks the petition was granted, on the condition that an officer of the school board should inspect the school once a year to make sure that we were giving the right training and maintaining proper discipline. Moreover, in our school, the children should not be obliged to study the state religion or the history of the Bible. We thought this a very great concession.

I was then appointed to take charge of this school, with Sister Christina Osterbeck as assistant. The children were each to pay a little, as they could obtain the means, for the expense of books, and other supplies. This was a fairly successful experiment. The officers of the school board also seemed satisfied with our work. I was permitted occasionally to make mission journeys into the district surrounding Christiania. Some of these journeys, taken in the winter, were very difficult.

In the summer of 1867, I was sent to visit the town of Kongsberg and Numme valley, where I had been before. From the city of Drammen, the road leads through a great forest, and then over a high mountain. When I reached the top of the mountain the sun was setting in the west behind me, and the shadow of the mountain was thrown miles and miles over the forest below the mountain and covered the whole city of Kongsberg. The magnificent beauty and vastness of this sunset from the mountain top worked upon my feelings and I sought a place under a small hill where, with enthusiasm in my heart, I kneeled before the Lord and opened my heart to him. I prayed especially that he would lead my footsteps, guide me on my way, and help me find a place to stay that night, for I had only a few cents left. At the close of my prayers, it seemed to me that I was surrounded by a holy influence.

I then began my descent of the mountain. It was already dark when I crossed the bridge over the river that flows near the city. Where was I to go? The houses of the city are built very near to each other. When I reached the first block, I turned to the right and walked around it. Then I crossed the street and began on the next block. At last, I thought, "Here is the place where I would better go in and knock." But the answer of the Spirit was immediately "No." I continued to walk to the right around the blocks and after a while I thought, "Now I will knock on the next door." But again the voice whispered, "No." I continued circling the blocks until I reached the eighth block. As I approached the middle of this block a voice whispered to me, "Here you are to enter." I knocked on the door, and a hearty, "Come in" was the answer. I stepped into the room and saw a man and his wife sitting by a table, playing dominos. I noticed that they looked at each other and smiled. "Can I obtain lodging here tonight?" I said. "Yes," said the man and pointed to a door that led into a little bedroom, in which were a table, a candlestick ready to be lighted, a bed, a wash bowl and other furniture. The lady came in and lighted the candle and asked me if I did not want something to eat. I was very hungry and could have eaten a good hearty supper, but I told her, if she pleased, a little bowl of bread and milk would be sufficient.

Next morning at six o'clock, I heard the man move about in

the house. As I learned later, he worked in the national rifle factory, and had to be at work quite early in the morning. After he had gone, the lady came into my room, placed a chair in front of the bed, and placed upon it a tray with food. When she left, I got up and ate this light breakfast with great appetite. At eight o'clock the man came back for his breakfast, and I was called in and placed at the table. There was a little pause. They looked at each other, and I asked if they would permit me to bless the food. The man said, "That is what we are waiting for." I blessed the food, and we began to eat. Then a very peculiar conversation ensued. "You have not been here before?" "No." "Who brought you here last night?" "No one." "Are you not a 'Mormon' elder?" "Yes." "Did you notice anything when you came in here last night?" "Yes." "What was it you noticed?" "I noticed that you looked at your wife and smiled and she smiled back."

He then told me the story. Just before I knocked on the door, they both heard distinctly a voice which said, "Here comes a servant of the Lord, who desires lodging for the night. Take good care of him." He continued, "The bed in which you slept last night has not been used during the last six years. The last person before you who slept there was a 'Mormon' elder to whom the room was rented out for a year. When he left, most of the people he had baptized sold out and went to Utah. No 'Mormon' has been here since."

I said to him, "I suppose then you know very well the teachings of 'Mormonism.'"

He said, "Yes; I believe that what is called 'Mormonism' is the message from God above. I am not baptized, and if I should go with you alone this evening to be baptized it would be known in the factory tomorrow, for those in charge there call upon their god from morning till evening, and he can reveal to those who pray to him just as our God revealed to us who would knock on our door last night. Then I would receive my 'walking papers' at once. Should I be baptized, and then lose my position, my savings would possibly take me and my family to Zion, but I have here at home an old father and mother who cannot help themselves and I have not means enough to take them with me. Perhaps my faith is not strong enough, or I should leave them in the hands of the Lord, for he provides for us all, but I cannot bear the thought of bidding them farewell and leaving them alone." These were his words.

I had a splendid mission journey through the N amme valley. I met many good and honest people. As far as I know, no missionary has been there since that day.



MISSION HOUSE OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS, AT COPENHAGEN,  
DENMARK.

## XI. THE LAND OF ZION.

In the spring of 1868, through the help of President C. C. A. Christensen, I succeeded in borrowing enough means to emigrate to Zion. I had then been in the Church a little more than seven years, the first two of which had been devoted in part, and the last five wholly, to missionary service. I married at this time, Anna Christina Krogero, an assistant in the mission office, who was a widow with four children. After bidding farewell to the many Saints in Christiania, we traveled to Copenhagen and thence to Liverpool, where we boarded the sailship, *John Bright*, which has carried many of our people across the ocean. After a voyage of six weeks, mostly in the face of a strong headwind, we reached New York on the 15th of July, 1868, during a spell of very warm weather. There were over 700 immigrants in our company.

We spent a few days in New York and were then sent westward by railway. The terminus of the railway was Laramie, which left about 600 miles to Salt Lake City. At Laramie there was a company from Utah with horses and mules to conduct the immigrants onward. We were organized into companies, with Hector

C. Haight as captain, and we began our journey over the plains along the banks of the Sweetwater.

We reached Salt Lake City the first week in September, 1868, after a six weeks' march from Laramie over the dry and warm plains, immersed in a cloud of dust from morning until night. The children and the weak mothers were allowed to ride in the wagons; while all the men were obliged to walk the whole distance in dust by day, and keep watch against the Indians at night. We were pretty well supplied with meat, flour, fruit and other food for our journey over the plains. When we camped in the evening, we cooked our food, and made our bread. All went fairly well.

At last we came to Emigration canyon, and had our first glimpse of Salt Lake City. We were glad and grateful to our heavenly Father for his fatherly care of us during our journey. On arriving at the Tithing yard, in Salt Lake City, our captain was released. I pitched our little tent and remained there during eleven days awaiting an opportunity to go to Cache Valley where I had some Norwegian friends of earlier days.

That fall, the grasshoppers visited Cache Valley, and all the crops were destroyed, so that there was not enough food to supply the needs of the people. As I was responsible for a family I took my blanket on my shoulder and walked over the mountains to Salt Lake Valley in search of work that would bring me a little money with which to buy bread stuff,—the greatest need of my family at the time. There was just then a call for "Mormon" boys to go out and do section work on the Union Pacific Railway. I worked at this until the October Conference at Salt Lake City, which I felt I must attend. I was given free fare to Salt Lake City, upon my promise to return, as the railroad company wanted the "Mormons" to continue the work on the road. When the railroad was laid to Corinne, Box Elder Co., we were laid off, and I went home to Logan the following night.

I rented a small log house, in the Logan Fifth ward, and began to work at once in the canyon, cutting timber. In this work I continued for five years. I took out logs for the house of Apostle Ezra T. Benson, in exchange for which I obtained the city lot on which I later built my residence. I filled a contract to deliver to the Utah Northern Railroad two thousand ties. Then I contracted to deliver to Brother Micklesen the timber for the grist mill in Logan, now known as the Central Mills. For this last contract I received six hundred pounds of flour. I also contracted with Alexander Allen of Newton and received as pay twenty gallons of molasses. I was now well off. I could have bread, with molasses, and this, indeed, was my steady diet while I worked in the mountains. Nevertheless, this work was very hard. Between times, I helped in the hay harvest, and thus earned

some wheat and, in fact, I took hold of whatever work offered itself.

In the fall of 1873, we began to build the Logan tabernacle. Brother Charles O. Card was called to act as the superintendent and he called me to assist him. It was my special work to keep accounts and to collect donations with which to pay the workmen. I measured and weighed rocks, sand, and other materials of construction, brought in for the building, and paid the workers in beef, vegetables, and the variety of things donated. Many beeves were brought in as donations, so we tanned the hides, and began to manufacture shoes. Thus came the Tabernacle Shoe Shop and Meat Shop in one building, which we called, Our Meat Market and Our Shoe Shop. I labored nearly six years in this capacity. In 1879, I was ordained a High Priest and set apart as a member of the Cache stake High Council.

## XII. MY THIRD MISSION.

In 1879, when the Logan tabernacle was completed, and we were at work on the Logan temple, I was called, at the October conference, to go on a mission to Scandinavia. I left Logan in November, 1879, and reached Liverpool, December 12. We had a rough voyage across the ocean. I was sent to Frederickstad, for a short time, then to my native city, Trondhjem, in Norway. Elder Ellingsen, of Lehi, was there when I arrived, but in a couple of months he was released to return to his home. I then remained there alone to represent the gospel of the everlasting covenant, but I harbored only gratitude to my heavenly Father. I organized a choir, held meetings and preached the gospel with all my might. Many were won to the truth. Those who did not enter the Church, through baptism, are good friends to our people, and respect "Mormonism" with its doctrines and principles of salvation. Among many others, I had the honor to baptize, as a member of the Church, Anna C. Widtsoe. Her son, John, I had the joy to baptize after the family arrived in Utah. Our meeting place, at that time, was on what was known as Mollenberg, in a house belonging to Johnson who later settled in Logan.

The branch over which I presided extended far into Northern Norway. I went frequently to the northern city of Namsos, where I rented a hall and had large meetings. Many were also brought into the Church in that place. I made many friends in Namsos, and among the more influential, a Mr. Salvesen. He belonged to the aristocracy of the city, but became friendly to me and the cause I represented, until he even offered me one of his large halls for our gatherings, in case the priest should attempt to

banish me. Mr. Salvesen, with his two sons, came to our meetings. Once when the hall was crammed full, he stood up before the congregation and testified to the truth of what I had said. So much to his honor!

I went from house to house and offered books and writings. I did not find much to eat, but I was well satisfied and when I sold a few books I could buy myself a little bread before I returned to my little room. And a little bread with fresh water tasted really good!

By the early spring, I had baptized, in Namsos, among others, Brother Hassing and his family, who are yet living in Salt Lake City. Before I left Namsos, I organized a Relief Society so that the good sisters could conduct meetings when I left.

In the spring of 1880, I was called to attend the conference in Christiania. After the conference, I tried to find some of the brethren and sisters of Christiania whom I knew so well in earlier days. Some I found, and many had moved away to the distant valleys of Norway. I decided to find, if I could, the family of Gunder Johnson. To do this, I was obliged, again, to walk the full length of southern Norway, over the Dovre mountain and down Guldbrands valley and up and down other valleys. I found at last Gunder Johnson with his family. I found that they had had no opportunities for schooling, nor for meetings, for several years, but they had our books and the *Scandinavian Star*, which had been read and reread until the books were almost worn out. They lived as the gospel demanded. I remained with these friends about two weeks, held meetings, and baptized all who would embrace the doctrines taught by me.

During this visit, in Guldbrands valley, I had very great success. The whole community took sides with me, until the priest came and broke up my crowded meetings, and warned the people against following teachers of false doctrines! This priest, Mr. Halling, was well respected and beloved of the people. He edited a magazine called *Rich and Poor*. He was good to the poor. He lived only four miles from where I held my meetings, and I stayed with a friend near his home.

One day I called on this minister to discuss things with him, but his feelings were so bitter that he showed me the door several times, and at last took my hat and cane and threw them out. As I left the house, he spoke bitter, hard words to me. Half a year later I came there again. The priest had then become the chairman of the county court. One of his duties was to keep the country roads in good condition. This brought him in quite close contact with the people who all worked on the roads. I was told that on one occasion when he was supervising a body of

road workers, while they were all at lunch, one of the men, a friend of mine, curious to know what the priest would say, said, "I should like to know what became of that tramp 'Mormon' preacher that we had here a half year ago." The priest immediately took up the conversation and said, "That man was no tramp. We were both angry when we left each other, but I would give much now if I could have that man in conversation again." This was his testimony that day, before a large gathering of people. I have now performed the endowment ordinances for him in the temple, and I look upon him as a good man, although he did all he could to work against me and my beloved religion.

When I had been in the mission field something over three



SIXTH WARD MEETINGHOUSE, LOGAN.

years, I was released. I reached my home in Logan late in the year, 1881.

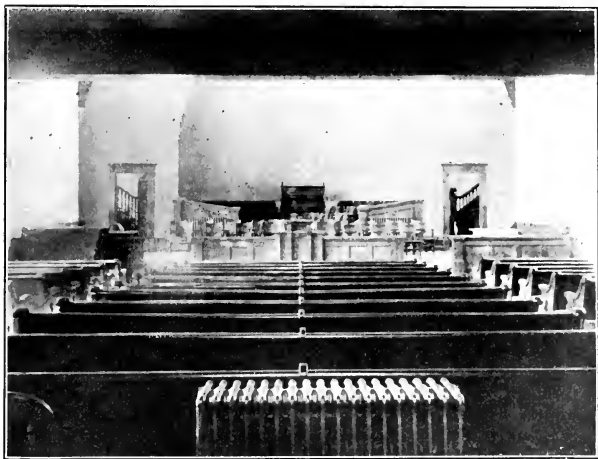
Upon my return from my third mission, I was called, in 1882, to take charge of a district of the Logan First ward, as Presiding priest. After the Logan temple was dedicated, this district was made a ward, and I was ordained to be bishop of the Logan Sixth ward, on June 6, 1884. The many duties pertaining to this calling occupied my time very completely for several years.



## XIII. MY FOURTH MISSION.

On October 11, 1886, I left Logan for another mission to Scandinavia. Upon my arrival in Copenhagen I was assigned to labor in Norway. I acted first as a traveling elder, and in that capacity visited nearly the whole of Norway. Later I presided, again, at Christiania. My mission was filled with active labors, and I believe much good was accomplished.

In the year, 1888, while I presided over the Christiania Conference, many were baptized into the Church. Among them was Brother Koldstad who afterwards became superintendent of the Christiania Sunday school. His wife seemed to be against



INTERIOR SIXTH WARD MEETINGHOUSE, LOGAN.

the gospel, but the Lord, who knows the hearts of the children of men, made manifest to her when she humbled herself in prayer, that "Mormonism" is a saving message sent by God from the heavens. It came about in this manner.

My mission was nearly ended. I had been away more than three years, and had been released to return home. I spent the last days before leaving Christiania in bidding goodbye to the Saints. One evening I took the train from the little village of Lien, where I had been visiting. That evening there was to be an important council meeting in Christiania, at which I was to

transfer the presidency of the conference to Elder O. H. Berg, of Provo, now bishop of the Provo Fourth ward. While the cars were rapidly moving towards Christiania, I sat in one of the compartments thinking of the business of the evening. Suddenly a voice came to me, telling me to go out to Granlund, where Brother Koldstad resided, for a woman there had fasted and prayed to the Lord that Elder Skanchy might visit her, and she desired to accept the gospel in which she had faith. In my simplicity, I believed the voice to be an imagination of my soul, and for about five minutes tried to convince myself that such was the case. I had very little time, because I had to be in Christiania before our council meeting began, in order to get things in order to deliver into new hands, and the place the voice told me to go was in an opposite direction from the meetinghouse. I felt that the Lord knew that my service was in his cause, and that the council meeting was in his service. Soon, however, the message came again, this time in a tremendous voice, that I must go to Koldstad's home, for a woman there had fasted and prayed to the Lord that I might come. The voice was so commanding that I arose to my feet, in the car, and I threw my right arm into the air, and said, "Yes, Lord, I will go." As soon as I reached the Christiania station, I proceeded there. With Brother Koldstad I found Sister Koldstad. I told her that I had received a message to meet there. I felt greatly touched by the Spirit. She told me that she had fasted and prayed that I would come to her home before I went away. She told me further that she believed all that I had taught, and if I thought her worthy, she would like to be baptized before I left Christiania. She was determined that I should baptize her the day following. Thus the Lord dictates in his own way to his children. This revelation from our heavenly Father was a very great testimony to me, and may be pleasing to all who believe in spiritual manifestations. Many years after, when we were all in Zion, I called on Sister Anna C. Widtsoe and her sister Lina Gaarden, and we visited Sister Koldstad in her home, Salt Lake City, during one of the annual conferences. Sister Koldstad, then and there, explained to them the manner of her conversion, and that I had come to her in answer to prayer.

#### XIV. THE QUIET YEARS OF HOME SERVICE.

From 1889, the time of his return from his fourth mission, to 1901, when he went on his fifth mission, Bishop Skanchy remained in Logan, Utah, in pursuit of his duties as Bishop of the Logan Sixth Ward. Under his direction, the ward prospered; the poor were well cared for; and a good spirit pervaded all the organizations of the ward.

During this period, also, the longest in his life without foreign missionary service, Bishop Skanchy built up his material interests. The lumber business which he had organized, flourished under his care. Though he had sacrificed many years in spiritual service, they were fully made up to him in a material way, during the periods that he could give himself to his business interests. He was always a good provider for his families,—they had comfortable homes, and the comforts of the day. His personal gifts and charities to people in Utah and in the old countries, have not been recorded, but they were large. Bishop Skanchy loved the poor and afflicted, and to their relief he gave unstintingly of his time, means and sympathy.

#### XV. MY FIFTH MISSION.

In 1901, I was called by Presidents Lorenzo Snow, George Q. Cannon, and Joseph F. Smith to take charge of the Scandinavian Mission, which then included Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. I was set apart in the Salt Lake Temple, April 2, by President C. D. Fjeldsted, and I was especially commissioned to buy and erect for the Church, mission houses in these three Scandinavian countries. I presented to the First Presidency the necessity of having C. D. Fjeldsted accompany me as he was well acquainted with Denmark. This was permitted. We had a pleasant voyage across the ocean.

In Copenhagen we bought the place where our mission house is now erected. President Fjeldsted was called home again and I remained to arrange the matter. I laid the foundation of the Copenhagen mission house and dedicated the place together with the corner stone the 2nd of March, 1901. The house itself was dedicated on the fourth of July, 1901.

The next mission house was built the year afterwards on the same ground that the old mission house had stood on in Christiania. The old house had been built of poor materials and was in a dangerous condition. We therefore took it down and sold the material by auction. I then contracted with architects and builders and the house was erected and finally dedicated the 24th of July, 1902, after a great celebration. The dedicatory prayer was offered by President Francis M. Lyman.

When these two countries had obtained their splendid houses, we turned our attention to Sweden. I went to Stockholm but found great difficulties confronting me there, since the Swedish law does not permit strangers to buy building lots. We were obliged, therefore, to secure agents to act for us. We bought, at last, a building lot in a very public place, in an excellent district. There we built a large four-story building, so arranged as to

make it a worthy and most beautiful place for presenting the gospel. Several smaller rooms in the building can be rented out, thus providing a small income. This mission house was dedicated the second of October, 1904, President Heber J. Grant offering the dedicatory prayer. Thus, my mission time was lengthened out so that I could remain until this house had been dedicated.

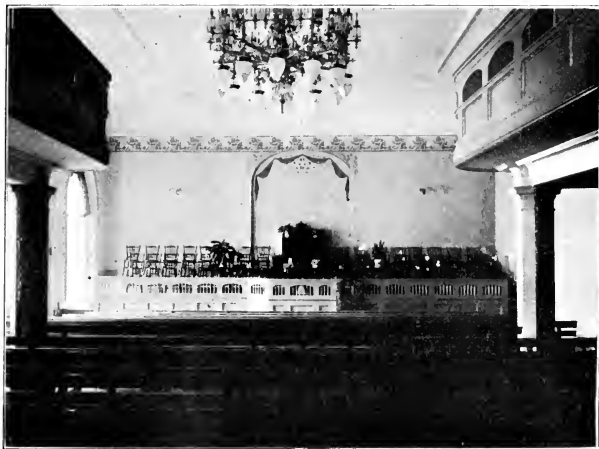
That I had my hands full on this mission, I suppose everyone



STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN, MISSION HOUSE.

will understand. My work appeared to be satisfactory to the Presidency of the Church, and as for myself, I trusted that I could complete this responsible work with satisfaction to my own soul. For the success that was achieved I will continue to give gratitude to my Father in heaven. I owe to him all the praise and honor.

At the time that we erected our mission houses in these countries, we contracted with a stone cutter, by the name of Peterson, for an assembly room and a room for the elders, in a dwelling



INTERIOR OF THE STOCKHOLM MISSION HOUSE, LOOKING FROM  
THE GALLERY.

house which he was erecting in Frederickshavn, Denmark. We also bought a house in Borups Street, in the city of Aarhus, Denmark, in which we constructed a baptismal font. Elder Adam Peterson, who was on a mission at that time, had great influence among the people of Aarhus, and won many friends, which all helped.

While I had charge of the Scandinavian Mission, Sister Anna C. Widtsoe and her sister Lina Gaarden, were called on a mission to Norway and remained there for about four years. These two sisters traveled over Norway, from the extreme north to the extreme south, and spared neither time nor money in order to bring before the people the gospel. They won honor and friends everywhere for the cause of truth. They bore a great testimony to the world, which we hope will in time bear fruit.



INTERIOR STOCKHOLM MISSION HOUSE, LOOKING TOWARDS THE GALLERY.

Brother H. J. Christiansen was also called on a mission again, at this time, and was chosen president over the conference in Copenhagen. He was born there, acquainted with the conditions, and had the language of Copenhagen under complete control. He gathered many friends for the gospel cause.

#### XVI. THE LAST WORD.

I do not care to write more, as most of my friends are acquainted with the work that has been done in the mission field. What I have done here at home has gratified me; and the people here know my whole life. Now I am on the sick list. I have forgotten to take care of myself in my desire to care for others. The Lord be honored and praised from now to eternity and forever. Amen. The Lord be merciful with us all and forgive our weaknesses and imperfections.

#### XVII. THE SIXTH MISSION.

After Bishop Skanchy had returned from his labors as President of the Scandinavian mission, he entered again upon his duties in the bishopric of the Logan Sixth Ward. He rallied the people to his support, and he laid the cornerstone of a new ward chapel,

one of the handsomest in the Church. This house is now completed.

On January 23, 1910, after twenty-five years of service, Bishop Skanchy was honorably released from his position as bishop of the Logan Sixth ward. A little later he closed out such of his business interests as required his daily active supervision.

On July 11, 1910, he went again to Norway, with his wife and younger children, to spend some time in gathering genealogical information for his temple work. This may be called his sixth mission, for he went with the authority of a missionary, and did much good while away.

True to his love for the city of his birth, Trondhjem, he took with him a large and expensive copy of Munkacsy's painting of Christ before Pilate, executed by Dan Weggeland, of Salt Lake City, which he presented to the branch, and which now adorns the meeting hall in Trondhjem.

He returned to Zion, June 22, 1911; never again to leave it in the flesh.

#### XVIII. THE END OF THE JOURNEY.

Soon after Bishop Skanchy returned from his last trip to Norway, he was seized with his last illness. The evil preyed steadily upon him, but his strong body and iron constitution could not be broken at once. It took years for the disease to undermine his strength and reach the vital processes of his system.

During his long illness, he composed the sketch now presented. From page to page it bears the marks of the physical sufferings which he endured. Had he been in good health, he would have told more of the marvelous experiences of his long missionary life. Perhaps, however, in good health, he would not have undertaken the work at all.

While withdrawn from active life by this lingering illness, he also reviewed his own poems, his favorite songs, and the word of God that he loved.

Bishop Skanchy, like all who live in close communion with spiritual things, was much of a poet; a lover of the fine arts, painting and sculpture, and an ardent worshiper of all natural beauty. In his last days, though filled with physical pain, he found the leisure for the contemplation of the things of the spirit he loved so well, which he had been denied in his active life.

Ever did his thoughts go back to the land of the midnight sun, in which he was born; where the gospel message found him, and where, in the full strength of his youth, he fought valiantly for the cause of truth, and won hundreds, yea, thousands, to the cause of eternal truth.

On Sunday, April 19, 1914, in his 75th year, his spirit returned to the God he had served so well. On the following Wednesday he was buried from the beautiful chapel he had built. Many wept at his grave, especially those who were poor in spirit or worldly goods, and whom this noble man had loved and helped and raised up, and brought into the glorious light of truth.

(THE END)





# DATE DUE

DEC 8 1983			
MAY 26 1982			
OCT 18 1983			
OCT 06 1983			
OCT 10 1980			
FEB 18 2002			
JUL 12 2004			

DEMCO # 227



